

House Republican Press Release

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House Republicans Track Money into Democratic Big City Strongholds



Calls to Fix Education Funding Formula That Penalizes Homeowners Across Connecticut

HARTFORD – Democrats have skewed funding toward the state's seven largest cities, home to some of the worst performing schools, according to data released today by House Republicans who demanded that the education funding formula that funnels resources to towns and cities be fixed.

The Democratic-controlled legislature reduced per pupil spending in suburban towns by 2 percent from 1996 through 2003, while at the same time increased that figure by 18 percent for the large cities. Democrats hold 30 of 32 house seats in those seven "urban core" cities as defined by a University of Connecticut demographic model that Republicans based their presentation on.

For every income tax dollar the cities send to Hartford they receive back \$4.39 in overall state aid. Conversely, the seven wealthiest towns get back just *two cents* for every income tax dollar sent to Hartford.

"This clearly exposes the hypocritical Democratic notion of every entity paying their fair share," House GOP Leader Robert M. Ward said during a press conference sandwiched between hearings on proposed education funding legislation. "Property owners in scores of towns have watched their tax bills go through the roof to pay for education because nearly half of all state aid goes to 18 percent of all Connecticut residents - all of whom live in Democratic-controlled cities."

UConn broke down all towns and cities into five categories: urban core(7); urban periphery(30); suburban(61); rural(63); and wealthy(7). All but urban core cities received less money back from the state than they paid in income taxes.

Ward said it was not just the big city lawmakers who must be held accountable, but Democrats representing suburban and rural districts. "Year after year, these Democrats have stood by silently voting for budgets that drive up their constituents' local taxes. We have to fix the school funding formula to make it fairer and stop penalizing taxpayers across Connecticut and provide *all* our students the education they deserve," Ward said.

The large cities receive, on average, nearly \$6,000 per student under the ECS formula, while 61 suburban towns get on average \$1,300.